United Nations E/C.2/2001/2/Add.15

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
26 December 2000

Original: English

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
2001 regular session
7-25 May 2001

Quadrennial reports, 1997-2000 submitted through the Secretary-General pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31

Contents

		Page
1.	Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization	2
2.	Asian Federation of Laryngectomees Associations	6
3.	Egyptian Red Crescent Society	7
4.	Learning for a Sustainable Future	8
5.	Light and Hope Association for Blind Girls (Al Nour Wal Amal Association)	11
6.	Médecins sans frontières	12
7.	Union of Ibero American Capitals	14

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1. Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization

Special consultative status granted in 1973

Aims and purposes

The aims of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) are:

(a) To unite broad democratic forces irrespective of political, religious, social and geographical differences against all forms of subjugation, including intolerance and hate; for the common aim of cooperation and solidarity in order to create a peaceful, happy and prosperous life for humankind;

(b) To support the national liberation movements and democratic forces struggling for the preservation and defence of world peace, national culture, sovereignty and territorial integrity, world economic security, ecology, human rights, universal justice, transparency, and free flow of information without distortion and hindrance;

(c) To consistently work for mobilizing popular support to the principles of the United Nations and its agencies.

Main activities

(a) South/South cooperation: highlighting the problems of the southern countries;

(b) Organizing conferences, seminars, round tables, discussions and meetings on disarmament, peace, development, human rights and ecology;

(c) Closely cooperate with international and national non-governmental organizations;

(d) Consultation conferences, including seminars, with national organizations in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa;

(e) Publications and documentation.

Relations with the specialized agencies and other non-governmental organizations

AAPSO has consultative status with UNIDO, UNESCO and UNCTAD. AAPSO is a member of CONGO and maintains close relations with all the other members.

1997

AAPSO was represented at the following:

(a) "Clash of Civilization or Dialogue of Culture", Cairo, 10-12 March;

(b) First preparatory meeting of the institutional support project of Egyptian non-governmental organizations for the implementation of Beijing Women's Conference document, organized by UNICEF, Cairo;

(c) XII Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, 4-8 April, New Delhi;

(d) Sixth Workshop of the International Women and Society Association, 10 April, Cairo;

(e) Asian Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, 4-7 May, Jakarta;

(f) Second Workshop on Technical and Institutional Funding of UNICEF NGOs, 21-22 May, Alexandria;

(g) First Popular Arab Forum, 17-24 July, Tripoli;

(h) Seminar on the Question of Palestine, 23-24 August, Geneva;

(i) European NGO Symposium and the United Nations International NGO Meeting on Palestine, 25-29 August, Geneva;

(j) Meeting of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, Havana;

(k) Project of the Legal Awareness for Female Lawyers, 7-9 October, Cairo;

(l) Fifth International Conference of the International Arab Women's Solidarity Association, 11-13 October, Cairo;

(m) Twentieth General Assembly of CONGO, 3-5 November, Geneva;

(n) Fourth Conference on Solidarity and Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region, 28-30 November, Valletta;

(o) Project for extending financial and institutional support to non-governmental organizations. Topic on alleviating the burdens of poor women, 22-23 December, Aswan;

(p) Project to promote women's literacy: second training session for lawyers (women), 27-29 December, Ismailia and Assiut.

1998

AAPSO sent representatives to the following:

(a) Conference in Support of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: Annual European NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, 23-26 February, Brussels;

(b) Special NGO Committee for Disarmament, 20-21 February, Geneva;

(c) International Conference on Human Rights Challenges in the 21st Century and the special session on "Cooperation among Developing Countries for the Realization of Human Rights", held to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of AAPSO, 5-6 March, New Delhi;

(d) Meeting of Arab Committees, March, Amman;

(e) Project for extending financial and institutional support to non-governmental organizations, meeting of the group on alleviating the burdens of poor women, sponsored by UNICEF, 10-11 March, Cairo;

(f) Conference "Breaking the Siege over the Great Jamaheria", 15-18 November, Tripoli;

(g) Fifteen Arab Committees Meeting, 20-25 November, Baghdad;

(h) International Conference on Terrorism: Threat to the 21st Century, 11-12 December, New Delhi.

1999

AAPSO representatives attended the following:

(a) United Nations African Meeting in Support of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, 20-22 April, Windhoek;

(b) Fifth Conference on Solidarity and Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region, 6-8 May, Aubagne (Marseille);

(c) The Hague Appeal for Peace Conference, 11-15 May;

(d) Conference on the Establishment of an Arab Network for Adult Education, organized by Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science, 23-25 May, Cairo;

(e) International Conference on Immigrants in a Globalized World, 22-23 May, Madrid;

(f) Preparations for the Women's March on World Women Day, 13 June, Cairo;

(g) AAPSO mission to China, 15-22 June;

(h) Conference "Demolish the Concrete Wall Constructed by South Korea at the Border", 10-20 August, Pyongyang;

(i) Sixteenth Arab Committees Meeting, 20-21 September, Sana;

(j) International Conference of Solidarity with the Palestinian People for their Right of Self-Determination and Independence, 23-24 September, Athens;

(k) Meeting of Arab Unions and Organizations on the dangers threatening the city of Jerusalem, 27 September, Cairo;

(l) 1999 Seoul International Conference of NGOs: Role of NGOs in the 21st Century: Inspire, Empower, Act, 10-16 October, Republic of Korea;

(m) Second Meeting of NGOs in Defence of the City of Jerusalem, 18 October, Cairo;

(n) Seminar on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 10-13 October, Cairo;

(o) Seminar on Women's Perspectives from East and West, 18 October, Cairo;

(p) Third Meeting of Arab Unions and Organizations on the dangers threatening the city of Jerusalem, 8 November, Cairo;

(q) Conference on the 100th Anniversary of Arab Women's Emancipation, 23-28 October, Cairo;

(r) Consultations of the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, with NGO representatives, 26-30 November, United Nations Headquarters;

(s) NGOs meeting in the Arab Women's Alliance, 12 December, Cairo;

(t) Fourth Meeting of Arab Unions and Organizations on the dangers threatening the city of Jerusalem, 30 January, Cairo.

2000

AAPSO representatives attended the following:

(a) The Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for establishing the Egyptian Women's Federation, 31 January, Cairo;

(b) Seminar on the Draft Egyptian personal status law, 5 January, Cairo;

(c) Seminar on the results of the Third Ministerial Meeting of World Trade Organizations in Seattle, February, Cairo;

(d) Commission on Human Rights, 20 March-28 April, Geneva;

(e) Seminar on Displaced Palestinians in the Diaspora, 30 March, Cairo;

(f) Seminar on Violence against Women, 3 April, Cairo;

(g) First Forum for the Elderly, organized by the National Centre in Support of Non-governmental Organizations for Population and Development, 29 March, Cairo;

(h) World Peace Council, 11-13 May, Athens;

(i) Workshop on the Egyptian Campaign against Poverty and Violence against Women, 18 May, Cairo;

(j) World Democratic Forum, 25 June, Warsaw;

(k) World Conference against A and H Bombs, 31 July-8 August, Hiroshima;

(l) Conference on the theme, "Vision of Culture in the 21st Century: Regeneration or Degeneration?", organized by AAPSO, 6-7 November, Cairo.

2. Asian Federation of Laryngectomees Associations

Special consultative status granted in 1997

Laryngectomees are people who have had their larynx removed as a result of laryngeal cancer and who breathe through a tracheostoma at the base of their throats. Laryngectomees are spoken-language disabled since removal of the vocal chords leaves them without a voice.

In accordance with resolution 37/52 (World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons), the Asian Federation of Laryngectomees Associations (Ginreikai) works to train instructors for esophageal speech rehabilitation and to create a basis for the promotion of full social participation by laryngectomees. The aim of the Federation is to provide opportunities to laryngectomees in the Asian region for vocalization rehabilitation and to assist as many laryngectomees as possible to regain their independence and to re-enter society.

Although the Federation has been continuously active over the past 15 years, since its establishment in 1985, 405 instructors have been trained since 1996, twice the number as in the previous reporting period, thus yielding particularly significant results. Over 10,000 laryngectomees, in 21 locations throughout Asia, are estimated to have achieved vocalization through training with these instructors.

Participation in the United Nations meetings

Representatives of the Federation attended United Nations Day lectures, hosted by the United Nations Information Centre, Tokyo, on 25 October 1996. The director attended a lecture by the Secretary-General at United Nations University, Tokyo, on 11 November 1999. Representatives of the Federation attended the United Nations-sponsored exhibition, *Children's Hopes for a New Century*, held on 22 April 2000.

3. Egyptian Red Crescent Society

Special consultative status granted in 1997

The Egyptian Red Crescent Society (ERC) is a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and cooperates with its related regional organizations as well as national societies, Arab League Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. ERC works closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and Cairo.

Aims and purposes

(a) **Disaster preparedness**: training of youth in disaster relief and first aid. ERC has in its branches strategic reserves of disaster relief materials and equipment.

(b) **Disaster response**: rehabilitation of disaster victims. ERC cooperates during wars with concerned authorities in assisting prisoners of war and civilian sufferers. It is involved in international relief activities through the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in affected areas.

(c) **Sustained social development for the most vulnerable**: especially women, children, youth and the elderly. All Red Crescent branches develop and implement social, health, environmental and income-generating programmes for the most vulnerable.

(d) **Dissemination of international humanitarian law and principles of the Red Cross movement**.

Participation in the work of the Council

ERC attended the Habitat meeting in Istanbul (1997) on urban development, the HIV/AIDS meeting in Africa with UNAID in Burkina Faso (September 2000) and the meeting of Congo in Geneva (November 2000).

Cooperation with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies

ERC works closely through joint projects with various United Nations organizations:

(a) **WHO**: ERC cooperates with WHO in the control of AIDS and drug abuse;

(b) **UNICEF**: ERC implements with UNICEF a project in sustained social development for the victims of the 1992 earthquake in Nahda city (Cairo), involving 20,000 families;

(c) **UNFPA**: ERC cooperates with UNFPA in the field of family planning;

(d) **UNHCR**: ERC cooperates with UNHCR in international relief activities;

(e) **Habitat**: Habitat has some joint programmes with ERC in the field of environmental protection.

Other relevant activities

(a) **Youth**: ERC has special youth clubs in each of its branches. Its vocational activities include training in computer skills and language abilities as well as vocational rehabilitation. Cultural activities cover sports, reading, libraries, Internet and handicrafts. Special attention is given to combating illiteracy.

(b) **Women**: ERC establishes and supports women clubs for training in household skills, holding seminars on health, social, cultural, environmental and other matters and raising public awareness in child feeding, family planning, etc.

(c) **Health activities**: ERC promotes health through the mass media and seminars, etc. It provides medical services in remote areas, in 7 hospitals, 22 family planning clinics and 68 polyclinics. ERC is the only non-governmental organization involved in blood donation promotion and blood banking. It runs five blood banks all over Egypt.

(d) **Environmental promotion**: ERC raises public awareness of environmental pollution through seminars, youth activities and projects in schools.

(e) **Financial aid**: Through IFRC, ICRC and UNHCR, ERC has made financial and in-kind donations, between 1995 and 2000, amounting to US$ 12 million, to the countries most affected by disaster. ERC established a village for orphans in Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina) and at present is building a school in Pristina (Kosovo).

4. Learning for a Sustainable Future

Special consultative status granted in 1997

Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF) is a Canadian non-profit organization that has taken a leadership role nationally and internationally in promoting education about the knowledge, skills and values essential to a sustainable future. LSF's mission is to:

(a) Develop a strategic framework and tools for the integration of the concepts, content (knowledge, skills and values) and methodologies of learning for sustainability in policies of ministries of education, school curricula, teacher education and professional development;

(b) Facilitate and support the establishment of networks and partnerships of teachers, administrators, school boards, students, parents and other stakeholders in every Canadian province and territory, committed to processes of lifelong learning for a sustainable future.

LSF produces and distributes a wide range of classroom materials on issues of sustainability, gives workshops to educators across Canada, consults with ministries of education on curriculum policy and maintains a web site on issues of sustainability.

The organization is active internationally. Until mid 2000 the Executive Director acted as Chair of the North America/Caribbean section of the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)

and continues to be represented at meetings of that body. LSF also participates in meetings of the Center for Sustainable Education in the United States of America.

During the past four years, LSF has been active in pursuing its mandate of teacher workshops and materials development throughout Canada.

1997

LSF developed four new *case studies and "inquiries"* for teachers: *Sustainable Cities: Reflections on Today's Urban Environment, Canada's Freshwater: A Commodity for Export, a Resource for Conservation?, Sustaining Canada's Forests,* and *Agriculture and Agribusiness: The Search for Sustainable Food Production.*

LSF revamped and updated its web site in English and French and added more links to other web sites related to sustainable development and environmental education. All documents produced by LSF, including its "*inquiries*", are now on the site.

As the North American and Caribbean Chair of the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), LSF's Executive Director prepared a three-year plan for CEC-North America/Caribbean, attended the CEC annual meeting in Gland, Switzerland, and several international meetings as a CEC representative. LSF co-chaired the Communication Planning for Inter-Sectoral Actions for Biodiversity Workshop at the Global Biodiversity Forum and participated in a meeting on the Basel Convention. In cooperation with IUCN/CEC, LSF presented a model for legislation on sustainable development to the parliamentarians from the Americas who met at the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas in Quebec City in September.

LSF actively participated in the Planèt'ERE forum, the first international Francophone forum on environmental education with a sustainable development perspective, held in Montreal in November. Around 750 delegates from more than 30 Francophone countries participated. The Montreal Declaration on environmental and sustainable development education is being widely circulated throughout the Francophone world and within United Nations organizations.

1998

LSF completed two new "*inquiries*" for teachers: *Sustainable Transportation* (in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Transportation); and *Energy: Making Sustainable Choices.*

LSF gave 29 sustainable development education workshops to more than 800 educators during which LSF documents were widely distributed. This brings the total of educators who have attended LSF workshops over the past four years to 2,900.

In cooperation with IUCN/CEC, LSF presented a model for legislation on sustainable development at the meeting of the Arctic Council on Sustainable Development, in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory.

The Executive Director travelled to Jamaica to conduct a workshop, Kits and Workshops on Environmental Education for Sustainable Development, and to

provide input for developing a proposal for a Jamaican kit and workshop within the context of Jamaica's National Plan on Environmental Education for Sustainable Development. Discussions were held with Jamaican authorities on the possible development of a similar strategy for the Caribbean.

1999

LSF cooperated with the Ontario Ministry of Education's Independent Learning Centre in the development and delivery of the grade-12, two-credit programme, The Hurley Island Project: Environmental Sustainability and Internet Technology. Canadian students from across Canada are exchanging views on local, national and global sustainability issues.

LSF wrote educational material on climate change for grades five to eight within the framework of the Development of an Education Strategy on Climate Change Project. The materials include: *A Guide for Teachers: Exploring the Issue of Climate Change at Levels Five and Six*; *Exploring the Issue of Climate Change at Levels Seven and Eight*; *The Question of Climate Change: Energy and the Way we Use it in Transportation*; *The Role of Forests and Oceans*; and *The Changing World of Business*. The publication of the educational materials was made possible by the contribution of the Climate Change Action Fund.

LSF participated in the Climate Change Conference/Trade Show held in Ottawa in June. LSF had a stand in the exhibition area to showcase its materials, and facilitated one of the workshops.

In recognition of its leadership effectiveness and broad base of support, LSF was chosen by EXPO 2000 as an international model project for sustainable development education.

LSF participated in a seminar on sustainable development education in Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by the Center for a Sustainable Future (CSF), LSF's American sister organization. LSF also participated in a two-day meeting at CSF, convened to create a North American Network for Sustainability Education. Twenty organizations were present.

As a follow-up to a mission of LSF and CEC/IUCN to Jamaica to advise the Government of Jamaica on implementing its strategy on environmental education for sustainable development, CEC/IUCN for North America and the Caribbean recommended that a similar strategy be developed for all of the Caribbean countries and that Jamaica lead the process.

2000

LSF hosted a kiosk in the Canadian Pavilion at EXPO 2000, the World Exposition in Hanover. The Executive Director participated in the opening ceremonies on 1 June.

LSF's Executive Director helped to prepare and participated in a two-day regional workshop in Kingston, Jamaica, hosted by Jamaica's National Environmental Education Committee and Natural Resources Conservation

Authority, in collaboration with LSF, the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust and UNEP, and sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency.

LSF participated on behalf of CEC/IUCN at the Salzburg Seminar on Education and Sustainable Agriculture at the Earth University in Costa Rica.

5. Light and Hope Association for Blind Girls (Al Nour Wal Amal Association)

Special consultative status granted in 1997

Basic to the aims and policy of the Light and Hope Association for Blind Girls is the development of new projects both for the well-being of blind girls, to provide new outlets to develop their skills and potential and to provide new sources of income for the Association and employment for blind girls. Nevertheless, the Association is always keen to develop and improve its already existing projects and services.

Significant improvement has been made in the quality of the products of the three main sections of the Vocational Centre of the Association. Its wickerwork, hand-made carpets and fashionable knitwear are now purchased for their quality and not only to help the Association. In 1998 a boutique for the products of the blind girls was established on the premises of the Association next to the main door, and this outlet for the Association's products has been very successful.

The Music Institute has seen new developments. The main orchestra (composed entirely of blind girls and women) performed in Canada (September 1998) and in Germany (September 1999), with great success. Several members of the orchestra are now happily married and living in their own homes.

A junior orchestra composed only of school girls is now competing with the main orchestra. Members of the junior orchestra can now perform with the main orchestra.

A third-generation orchestra, composed of elementary school girls, is being developed and is already in great demand. These children always reach the hearts of their audiences.

Constant efforts are being made by the Association to help in the education of the girls, besides the formal school education provided by the Ministry of Education on the premises of the Association.

Computers have been installed to print ordinary books in Braille. The audio-Braille library has been enlarged to provide space for the computer centre and for new specialized equipment for the visually impaired.

The kindergarten, which opened its doors in 1995 on new premises in Nasr City, is now a model kindergarten. New methods and specialized equipment for teaching blind children as well as specialized educational toys are constantly introduced. Boarding facilities are provided at the main centre for those children whose parents cannot bring them to school every day.

In 1998, the new Centre for Advanced Vocational Training was established at new premises in Nasr City to provide new skills and employment for the girls as

well as income generation on a larger scale for the Association. The Centre has three sections: a plastic manufacturing machine for different types and sizes of plastic bags; knitting machines for a variety of products such as blankets, shawls and school pullovers; and a sewing centre for high-demand products in large quantities such as bed sheets for hotels and hospitals, uniforms for nurses and hotel employees, and school uniforms.

6. Médecins sans frontières

General consultative status granted in 1993

1. Médecins sans frontières (MSF) is the world's largest independent organization for emergency medical relief. In its first 25 years of action, MSF established a worldwide reputation for providing quick and effective aid to those whose lives are put at risk by war or natural disaster. Médecins sans frontières is completely independent of all Governments and institutions, and of political, economic and religious influences. Consequently, MSF provides effective medical aid with or without the consent of the host Government, whereas other agencies sometimes cannot. Every year, around 2,000 MSF volunteers work alongside several thousand local staff on projects in some 80 countries. In addition to providing emergency relief aid, MSF speaks out about the systematic abuses of humanitarian law and human rights witnessed by its staff, often bringing injustice and malpractice to the world's attention.

MSF's international network is made up of 19 national sections; its international secretariat, based in Brussels, is responsible for coordinating the Geneva, and New York-based liaison activities with other international organizations and the United Nations, and for the fulfilment of MSF's consultative status to the Council.

MSF receives grants from international organizations and Governments for up to 51 per cent of its total resources, including 9-10 per cent from UNHCR. These funds are allocated to programmes in the following countries and areas: Afghanistan (a new hospital surgery unit), Angola (basic health care, repatriation of Angolan refugees), Armenia (emergency rehabilitation of health facilities), Burma/Thailand border (Myanmar refugees), Burundi, Goma (assistance in refugee camps), Guinea, Kenya, Somalia (Kismayo hospital), Chechnya, Sri Lanka (assistance to displaced populations), Congo/Zaire (emergency assistance to refugees).

Along with UNICEF and WHO, MSF created the International Coordination Group (ICG) in January of 1997. This four-year-long medical project, begun after the disastrous outbreaks of meningitis in 1995-1996 in West Africa, seeks to ensure better coordination in guaranteeing the availability of significant vaccine stocks for major epidemics.

Participation in the work of the Council and other United Nations bodies

During the past five years, Médecins sans frontières participated, in New York and Geneva, in numerous meetings involving staff and officers of the United Nations Secretariat, agencies and member States of the United Nations.

From April 1994 to the present, MSF has been providing assistance in the Rwanda/Burundi/Congo area and extensively communicating with the United Nations departments, agencies, member States and, in particular, the Security Council, on the plight of the civilians in the region. The first of such meetings was in April 1994, when MSF's representatives met with Ambassador Keating of New Zealand, then President of the Security Council, to brief him about the breadth of massacres directly witnessed by MSF teams in Butare, Rwanda.

Throughout the Bosnia/ex-Yugoslavia crisis, from Vukovar (1991) to Gorazde (1994) and Srebrenica (1995), MSF made numerous contacts and held meetings with United Nations officials and member States. MSF expressed the frustration of relief teams regarding the situation in ex-Yugoslavia, provided first-hand testimony, and spelled out the humanitarian dilemma at every stage of the conflict.

On 25 and 26 July 1996, MSF's representatives met with various ambassadors of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to raise the humanitarian community's awareness of the situation in Liberia and the suffering of the civilian population in Monrovia.

In December 1996 and February 1997, MSF's representatives repeatedly addressed the Sub-Group on NGOs at the High-Level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. Concerning Council decision 1996/297, the MSF delegate to the United Nations asked that the current levels of NGO affiliation and participation be extended beyond the Council.

On 12 February 1997, under the "Somavia formula" MSF, together with CARE, ICRC and OXFAM, was invited to brief the Security Council and member States of the Council, on the situation in the Great Lakes region. On that occasion, MSF representatives came directly from Bujumbura, Kigali and Kisangani to give first-hand accounts of the deteriorating situation in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Participation in the work of other relevant bodies

Médecins sans frontières representatives participated in numerous seminars and conferences, such as the Health Coordination in Emergency Situations (WHO, Geneva, March 1997), Inter-Agency Advisory Group on Refugee Health (UNHCR, November 1997), the New Emergency Health Kit (UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO and others), and the Conference on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court.

The MSF delegate to the United Nations in New York participates in the weekly meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee (IASC), chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. IASC is the central humanitarian policy-making body in the United Nations system, with a mechanism by which joint decisions are taken on how best to respond to specific humanitarian crises. IASC members include the Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations Secretariat), UNHCR, UNDP, WFP, FAO, UNICEF, WHO, UNCHR, IOM, ICRC. Issues covered in these meetings include the provision of assistance and protection to internally displaced people, linking relief and development, strengthening system-wide accountability, monitoring and evaluation, the setting of priorities for advocacy campaigns and determining the allocation of responsibilities and operational responses to particular crises.

MSF also helps frame the agenda of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for its monthly meetings with InterAction members at Headquarters in New York. Similar meetings are held in Geneva. MSF also participates in the Executive Committee of UNHCR and its standing meetings. The situation of the refugees and displaced population has been regularly discussed at the highest level between the directors of MSF sections and UNHCR officials. Informal consultation and information exchange at every level takes place on a regular basis with MSF, its United Nations colleagues, donor countries and member States of the United Nations, both at Headquarters and in the field.

7. Union of Ibero American Capitals

Special consultative status granted in 1989

Aims and purposes

The Union of Ibero American Capitals (UCCI) is an international, municipal, non-profit organization which assembles the 26 most important cities of Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. The main aims and purposes are:

(a) To encourage links and relationship between the capital cities of Ibero America;

(b) To consider all matters concerning the life, activities and problems of its affiliated municipalities;

(c) To promote the rights of neighbourhoods (of the inhabitants of the member cities), especially the right to a more peaceful coexistence, and participation in public affairs, and the field of intermunicipal relations;

(d) To footer the balanced and harmonious development of the capital cities of Ibero America, striving for cooperation and solidarity among them;

(e) To organize meetings and other activities that will foster an effective exchange of experiences and knowledge.

Participation in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies

(a) Meeting of mayors and other authorities of Latin America and the Caribbean, for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 1997;

(b) VIII Meeting of the Network Association of Municipalities and Cities of Latin America, Miami, Florida, July 1998;

(c) Regional (Latin America and the Caribbean) meeting for the discussion of the World Charter of Local Self Government, Santiago, Chile, July 1999;

(d) Informative session for NGOs, United Nations Office at Geneva, November 1999.

Cooperation with United Nations bodies

(a) Preparatory meeting for the Summit "Mayors for Peace" (UNESCO), La Paz, Bolivia, October 1998;

(b) Summit "Mayors for Peace" (UNESCO), La Paz, Bolivia, July 1999.

Other relevant activities:

International meetings

(a) Seminar of the European Union on International Cooperation for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights in Latin America, Madrid, Spain, February 1997;

(b) Symposium: The Latin America and Caribbean City in the New Century, Barcelona, Spain, March 1997;

(c) XV Congress of the World Federation of United Cities, Lille, France, June 1997;

(d) IV Ibero American Conference on the Family, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, August 1997;

(e) 1st International Seminar of the European Union Programme on "Cities and Drugs", Santiago, Chile, November 1997;

(f) Summit of Culture Executives of the "Mercociudades" Network. Buenos Aires, Argentina, May 1998;

(g) Interamerican Mayors Conference, Miami, Florida, July 1998;

(h) Seminar: "Spain in Democracy", Madrid, August 1998;

(i) Ibero American Cities Meeting for the Right of Health, Buenos Aires, October 1998;

(j) Meeting of the World Federation of United Cities, Seville, Spain, January 1999;

(k) XXXVI Congress of the International Union of Local Authorities, Barcelona, Spain, March 1999;

(l) VII Conference on Urban Superprojects: Global Cities of the XXI Century, Madrid, May 1999;

(m) Intermunicipal Congress on Consumption: Priorities for the Protection of Consumers, Madrid, May 1999;

(n) Summit of Ibero American Cities, Lima, October 1999.